



River Star Program Volunteers Nadine Miltier and Willie Barnes of MARAD's South Atlantic Region cleaning up Pescara Creek in Norfolk, the first wetland adopted by The Elizabeth River Project's River Stars Program

MARAD-SAR Recognized for Environmental Achievement

By Willie Barnes, South Atlantic Region

On January 20, 2005, MARAD's South Atlantic Region Office was recognized for its achievements in The Elizabeth River Project's River Stars Program. The mission of The Elizabeth River Project is to restore the Elizabeth River to the highest practical level of environmental quality through government, business, and community partnerships. The River Stars Program was created to encourage voluntary pollution prevention and wildlife habitat enhancement of the Elizabeth River, which is located in southeastern Virginia and one of the most industrialized waterways on the east coast.

Any individual, organization, business, or school in the Elizabeth River watershed can become a River Star. Participants start by signing a River Star commitment, pledging to pursue

at least one significant goal in wildlife habitat enhancement or pollution prevention.

MARAD is the first River Star to adopt an Elizabeth River Project wetland as part of meeting the habitat enhancement requirement for Achievement Level River Star status.

MARAD adopted Pescara Wetland located in Norfolk as its habitat site. Plans include restoring the walking path, planting native shrubs around the sign, creating an educational map for visitors, and conducting quarterly cleanups.

River Stars in 2004 reduced pollution by 10.5 million pounds. That did not include an additional 11 million pounds of material recycled. In addition, the River Stars documented the conservation or creation of 18 acres of wildlife habitat.

MARAD-SAR received an Achievement Level Award at the River Stars Recognition Luncheon in Portsmouth, Virginia. River Stars organizations are classified as Commitment Level, Achievement Level, and Model Level. The South Atlantic Level Office's goal is to advance to Model Level by 2007.

MARAD Update

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Publisher
John Jamian

Managing Editor
Susan Clark

Editor
Ella Thomas